

# **TOLL SCENARIOS FOR TACOMA NARROWS BRIDGE**

## **BRIEFING PAPER**

Prepared for the  
September 2006 TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING

Prepared By: David Pope, Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Systems Manager

Reviewed By: Randy Hain, Olympic Region Administrator

Greg Selstead, Director, Tolling

Approved By: John Conrad, Asst. Secretary Engineering and Regional Operations

### **PURPOSE:**

Discuss various TNB toll rate scenarios to allow future toll rate setting by the Transportation Commission.

### **ACTION/OUTCOME:**

Information for Commissioners.

### **BACKGROUND:**

1. ***Toll Rates.*** Tacoma Narrows Bridge will start toll collection when the new bridge opens to traffic in 2007.
  - a. RCW 47.46 designates the Transportation Commission as the state toll setting authority and requires tolls for TNB to be set to repay the debt and provide for operations and maintenance.
  - b. Tolls and consultant staff will present six scenarios for toll rates. Some of the possible toll rate scenarios include a discount for electronic toll payment – “Good To Go!” The discount was defined in a legislative budget proviso to provide an “incentive” to electronic toll users.
  - c. Toll discussions will include the previous “base” assumption of \$3.00 toll for all users that is the basis for the current financial plan and debt assumptions. Alternative scenarios include a \$1.50 electronic toll rate and the impact of that discount. In 05-07 a \$1.3m transfer was provided in the budget from the multimodal account to the TNB account, followed by an assumed \$8.7m transfer in the legislative plan for 07-09. The WSDOT budget proposal for 07-09 includes the legislative planned \$8.7 million amount for a total of \$10m in order to provide the discount.

- d. Discussions will include maintaining the cash/electronic toll difference, the discount duration and a possible increased cash rate to offset discounted ETC revenues.
- 
- 2. ***Revenue and Cost Summary.*** WSDOT tolls staff will present the various scenario impacts on debt service and costs. As requested previously, revenue projections have been structured to maintain the financial plan assumptions to repay project debt and pay costs. WSDOT tolls staff will work with the TNB citizens committee and Transportation Commission in two workshops to provide the Commission sufficient data to set TNB toll rates by early 2007.
    - a. Citizens committee workshop Oct 2006
    - b. Transportation Commission workshop Nov/Dec 2006

**RECOMMENDATION:**

While there will be an opportunity for the Commissioners to ask questions, no action is required at this time.

For further information, contact: David Pope, Tacoma Narrows Bridge Toll Systems Manager, 253-534-4673.